

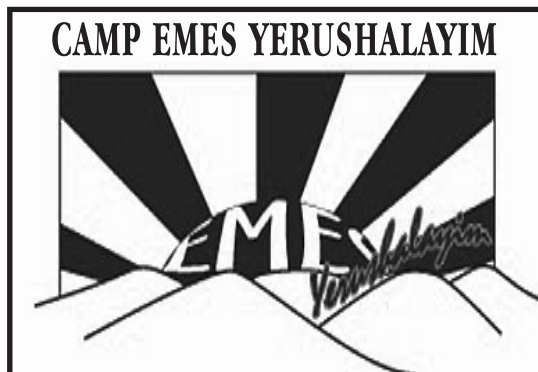
SPOTLIGHT

He seems awfully young to be holding such a responsible position. In fact, many thought the lifelong dream he proposed was too ambitious for someone his age. But at 25, Mr. Elly Merenstein is almost single-handedly changing the summer camp experience as we know it. His brainchild, the pioneering enterprise he brought to fruition last summer, is Camp Emes Yerushalayim.

If you've ever considered sending your son to Eretz Yisrael for the summer season, but were wary of the prospective physical dangers or possible secular influences, Camp Emes is the spiritual antidote to all your parental worries. Not only does this home-away-from-home set the stage for unparalleled fun, adventure and excitement, but its atmosphere is also one of heightened ruchniyus and elevated Torah hashkafah. This is not your typical Israeli touring camp. In fact, Mr. Merenstein has somehow managed to capture the very essence of a Catskill summer environment, and transport it across the globe, to the place of eternal kedusha.

Elly Merenstein, Founder and Director of Camp Emes, lives in Sha'arei Chessed, Yerushalayim. He currently learns full-time in kollel, at Yeshivas Midrash Shmuel. As a young child and eventually as a counselor, he spent many summers in Camp Agudah of N.Y. He'd always been very involved in activities and productions during his many seasons in the mountains, and he looks back on those 2 months per year as times of personal growth, maturity and spiritual development. He strongly believes that a few weeks of summer camp can have an enduring influence. That short period of time can invigorate, motivate and inspire.

About 1 1/2 years ago, a group of his campers from Agudah suggested that he start his own camp. After much



CHANGING THE SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCE

BY CHAYA SARA SCHLUSSEL

deliberation, Mr. Merenstein decided to approach his Rosh Yeshivah with the idea. He wanted to create the camp out of his yeshivah's auspices, under the Torah leadership and guidance of HaGaon Rabbi Binyomin Moskowitz, of Yeshivas Midrash Shmuel. After receiving his Rebbe's wholehearted consent, he proceeded to transport the setting of the Catskill region, to the site of Ir Hakodesh.

Camp Emes is situated 15 minutes away from the kosel. Its itinerary includes a multitude of tours to all the major attractions and mekomos hakedoshim throughout the country. But that's not all. The list of extra-curricular events and activities offered at Camp Emes ensure the ultimate, once-in-a-lifetime summer escapade. There are guitar lessons, sports leagues and trophy championships, along with daily shiurim and chavrusos. Football, beach volleyball, baseball and swimming are interspersed between uplifting encounters with Gedolei Yisroel such as R' Elyashiv and R' Steineman and rousing speakers such as Rabbi Asher Wade, Rabbi Dovid Orlofski, and Rabbi Avraham Rottman. Fre-

quent drives to Bnei Brak and Meah Shearim give campers a glimpse of ancient Torah tradition, in the land of our heritage. By contrast, there are also trips to water parks and the biblical zoo, hikes in the mountains, mudfights by the Dead Sea, barbecues, jeeping, biking in the desert, bowling, and camping in Bedoin (Israeli-owned) tents in the Negev. To top it all off, Camp Emes provides pulse-pounding thrills like water skiing, horseback riding, cliff rappelling and paintballing for all adrenaline junkies. Understanding that summer vacation is an interlude in which to rejuvenate and revitalize for the year to come, Camp Emes has created a strong learning program led and staffed by rebbeim with years of experience and outstanding mechanchim from the yeshivah.

Mr. Yonah Baumann is the beloved Head Counselor at Camp Emes Yerushalayim. Brimming with talent and a kind, fun-loving personality, Yonah spent many summers at Camp Simcha. That experience now enables him to bring out the best in each specific camper at Camp Emes. He encourages every boy to participate in those activities that he shows particular interest in or proclivity to. He makes sure every talent is highlighted, and every skill is fine-tuned. For example, at the end of the summer season, those campers who displayed singing aptitude were taken to a recording studio, where they produced their very own music CD. The disc was later mailed to each of them, so they could relive the ruach of Yerushalayim during the winter. Those masmidim who exemplified Torah learning, were given extra time to study with assiduous chavrusos.

Another incomparable contributor to the camp is Mr. Nissi Merenstein, who made his lasting mark as Sports Director. His tireless dedication to every child helped launch last year's resounding success. He was solely responsible for initiating and transport-

Listen To The Country Yossi Radio Show Every Wednesday Night, 10PM - Midnight On WSNR 620AM
For Magazine or Radio Advertising Call: (718) 851-2010

ing from the Catskills to the world of Eretz Yisrael camping, the exciting and legendary inter-camp staff basketball games. Camp Emes, in its rookie season, emerged victorious in every game - against every team they challenged. In general, there is a very special rapport, inherently evident between all the campers and staff members at Camp Emes. Everyone pitches in, to excel as a unit at any objective they undertake.

The safety issue must always be taken into account, when sending a child to Israel. Which is why, at Camp Emes, an IDF-trained security guard and a paramedic accompany the vacationers at all times. They travel in their own private bus, and counselors keep close tabs on the boys every minute of every day. The camp's quarters are in dormitory facilities, with a counselor sleeping in each dorm room. There is one adult overseeing 5-6 children continuously. Consequently, campers are under strict, unremitting supervision, 24 hours. A medical clinic is located a short distance from the residence, and medical insurance is provided by the camp. Every child's wellbeing is a paramount priority at Camp Emes.

To experience Tisha B'av in Yerushalayim is to most authentically relive the churban. Unlike Tisha B'av in N.Y., where the story sometimes seems distant and intangible, in Eretz Yisrael its tragedy is vividly and concretely felt. The boys get a chance to walk in the very footsteps of our history. Last year, on that catastrophic fast day, campers at Camp Emes were brought to Yad V'shem and shown a heartrending video by the renowned and riveting lecturer, Rabbi Paysach Krohn. The Spinke Rebbe of Bnei Brak led and explained the kinus. They were then taken to the kosel to witness firsthand all that remains of our glorious Beis Hamikdosh - and to pray for its imminent rebuilding. Motzei Shabbos Nachamu included a lively kumzitz in the Cardo of the old city, led by R' Avraham Danziger and Dr. Moshe Rothkoph of the "Lakewood Chevra."

Mr. Merenstein's sincere goal was to establish a ruchniyusdig Torah camp in the heart of Yerushalayim. His ambition was to fuse infectious fun with

fundamental hashkafah, in the most exalted of all locations. He credits its ultimate accomplishment to an overwhelming and incredible amount of Siyata D'shmaya, Yeshivas Midrash Shmuel, an extraordinary staff, and his devoted, diligent and determined wife.

Yes, he seems awfully young to hold such a responsible position. But as his many returning campers will readily attest, the heart and soul Mr. Merenstein invested in Camp Emes Yerushalayim have made his lifelong dream an innovative, enduring reality.

Registration is quickly filling up!
Apply to Camp Emes Yerushalayim
online, at www.campemes.com
or mail applications to:
40 Caranetta Drive
Lakewood, New Jersey 08701
Email:
emesyerushalayim@yahoo.com
US Telephone:
Yonah Baumann: 718-344-3372
Israel Telephone: 718-713-8453 or
011-972-2-566-5177



BS"D



CAMP EMES YERUSHALAYIM



Reasonably Priced
Safety and security - top priority

Boys ages 13-18
5 1/2 weeks - July 2 - August 8

JOIN US FOR OUR 2007
2ND EXCITING SUMMER! 5767

Daily Learning Program • Experienced Magidei Shiur & Kollel Avreichim
Beautiful Indoor Gym • Uplifting Shabbasos
Tour The Country From North To South
Visit Mekomos Kedoshim • Meet with Gedolei Eretz Yisrael

EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAM
Learning B'Chavrusah - Guitar Lessons
Sports Leagues - Live Studio Recording
Lifeguard Course - Red Cross Certified

SEND YOUR SON TO THE
"REAL MOUNTAINS"
AND GIVE HIM THE
SUMMER OF A LIFETIME!

Availability is limited. For registration and information, please contact:
R' Elly Merenstein (Israel) Yona Bauman (USA)
718.713.8453 or 02.566.5177 718.344.3372

Office hours: Sun-Wed 7am-4pm EST • emesyerushalayim@yahoo.com • www.campemes.com

Camp Emes Yerushalayim is under the guidance of
HH"G R' Binyomin Moskowitz Shilf" and is affiliated with Yeshivas Midrash Shmuel.